

Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi Joins Thousands of Community College Students to Demand Continued State Support for Higher Education and Job Retraining



SACRAMENTO – Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, a University of California regent and California State University trustee, joined thousands of community college, CSU, and UC students today during the California Community Colleges’ “March in March: Rescue Education”, calling on lawmakers to recognize the importance of California’s continued investment in higher education and job retraining.

“We cannot slam the door on higher education particularly at the community colleges where everything from nursing to preschool education to retraining Californians who have lost their jobs takes place,” Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi said. “We need to keep the doors of education opportunity open for all.”

California Community Colleges are the state’s largest workforce training provider, serving 2.7 million students and conferring more than 125,000 degrees and certificates in more than 175 degree and certificate programs. According to the 2008 Accountability Report for the Community Colleges, students who received a degree or certificate from a California community college in 2000-01 saw a 61 percent increase in their wages three years after earning their degree.

“In these difficult times when families are losing their homes and jobs, we must maintain the opportunity for college students to improve their lives,” Garamendi said. “With the state facing a 10.1 percent unemployment rate, the worst in over a quarter century, California’s community colleges are one of the state’s most effective outlets available for career advancement and job retraining.”

Every dollar spent on higher education equates to \$3 in new revenue for the state, and nearly three-quarters of the 377,000 degrees conferred in 2007 were at public colleges and universities in the state. It is estimated that if an additional two percent of Californians had associate’s degrees and another one percent earned bachelor’s degrees, this could equate to the creation of 174,000 new jobs, a \$20 billion boost to California’s economy, and a \$1.2 billion annual increase in local tax revenues.

For more information on today’s march, see here: <http://www.iwillmarch.com/> .